



This Washington Post-University of Maryland poll was conducted Sept. 27-Oct. 5, 2017 among a sample of 1,663 adults interviewed through the AmeriSpeak Panel, the probability-based panel of NORC at the University of Chicago. Interviews were conducted online and by landline and cellular phones. Overall results have a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 3.5 percentage points.

*= less than 0.5 percent

1. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling his job as president? Do you approve/disapprove strongly, or somewhat?

	----- Approve -----			----- Disapprove -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
10/5/17	37	17	19	63	14	48	1

Compare to Post-ABC polls:

9/21/17	39	26	13	57	9	48	4
8/20/17	37	22	15	58	13	45	5
7/13/17	36	25	11	58	10	48	6
4/20/17	42	27	15	53	10	43	5

2. How often can you trust the federal government in Washington to do what is right?

	----Trust government----				-Distrust government--			
	NET	Always	Most of the time	About half of the time	NET	Some of the time	Never	No opinion
10/5/17	10	1	9	27	63	51	12	*
2016*	11	2	10	33	56	43	13	1
2012*	11	1	10	27	61	51	10	1

*American National Election Studies

Compare to American National Election Studies:

How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right-- just about always, most of the time or only some of the time?

	Just about Always	Most of the time	Some of the time	(vol.) None of the time	Don't know/Depends
2012	2	20	76	2	0
2008	5	25	68	2	0
2004	4	43	52	1	0
2002	5	51	44	0	0
2000	4	40	55	1	1
1998	4	36	58	1	1
1996	3	30	66	1	0
1994	2	19	74	3	1
1992	3	26	68	2	1
1990	3	25	69	2	1
1988	4	36	56	2	1
1986	3	35	57	2	2
1984	4	40	53	1	2
1982	2	31	62	3	3
1980	2	23	69	4	2
1978	2	27	64	4	3
1976	3	30	62	1	3

1974	2	34	61	1	2
1972	5	48	44	1	2
1970	6	47	44	0	2
1968	7	54	36	0	2
1966	17	48	28	2	4
1964	14	62	22	0	1
1958	16	57	23	0	4

3. How often can you trust each of the following to do what is right?

10/5/17 - Summary table

	---Trust government----				-Distrust government--			No op.
	NET	Always	Most of the time	About half of time	NET	Some of time	Never	
a. The government in your state	23	1	22	28	50	40	9	*
b. Your local government	31	1	30	29	40	32	8	*

4. How proud are you of the way democracy works in America - very proud, somewhat proud, not very proud, or not at all proud?

	----- Proud -----			----- Not proud -----			No opinion
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Not too	Not at all	
10/5/17	63	16	48	36	27	9	*
3/14*	74	25	49	18	14	3	8
3/04*	84	32	52	10	8	2	5
9/6/02	90	49	41	9	5	4	1
9/28/01**	96	60	36	3	2	1	2
5/25/96*	79	27	52	16	13	3	4

*General Social Survey by NORC

**National Tragedy Study by NORC

5. Do you think the current political system in the United States is basically functional or basically dysfunctional? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

	----- Functional-----			----- Dysfunctional -----			No opinion
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
10/5/17	35	4	31	64	37	27	1

Compare to Post-ABC:

"Do you think the current political system in the United States is basically functional or basically dysfunctional? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?"

	----- Functional-----			----- Not functional -----			No opinion
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
3/6/16	29	10	19	69	18	51	2
9/10/15	33	12	21	64	18	46	3

6. (IF DYSFUNCTIONAL) In what ways would you say the political system is dysfunctional? (open-end)

7. Do you think problems in America's politics right now (are similar to most periods of partisan disagreement), or do you think problems (have reached a dangerous low point)?

Similar to most periods of Have reached a No

10/5/17	partisan disagreement	dangerous low point	opinion
	29	71	1

7a. (AMONG THOSE WHO SAID DANGEROUS NEW LOW) Do you think the problems in America's political system are temporary, or are they a new normal?

10/5/17	Temporary	New normal	No opinion
	44	55	1

NET 7/7a

10/5/17	Similar to most periods of partisan disagreement	---Have reached a dangerous low point---	No opinion
	29	71	1
		NET Temporary	New normal
		31	39
			No opinion
			1
			op. 1

8. Thinking back to political divisions in the U.S. during the Vietnam War, do you think divisions today are (at least as big as) during the Vietnam War, or are divisions today (smaller than) they were then?

10/5/17	At least As big as	Smaller than	No opinion
	70	27	3

9. Do you think Trump's presidency is making the U.S. political system more functional, more dysfunctional, or is he not making any difference?

10/5/17	More functional	More dysfunctional	No difference	No opinion
	19	58	22	1

10. What about each of the following - are each of the following parts of the political system basically functional or dysfunctional?

Summary table - 10/5/17

	Functional	Dysfunctional	No opinion
a. Federal agencies, such as the Food and Drug Administration*	47	50	3
b. Congress*	19	80	1
c. Federal courts, including the Supreme Court*	57	42	1
d. Donald Trump's administration	29	70	1
e. The news media	33	65	2
f. The system of checks and balances on the powers of the Presidency, the Congress and the Supreme Court*	43	56	2

*Asked of half sample

11. How much, if at all, do you blame each of the following for causing dysfunction in the U.S. political system? (Half sample)

Summary table - 10/5/17

	A lot	Some	Not at all	No opinion
a. The Democratic Party	32	54	13	1
b. The Republican Party	38	53	8	1
c. Donald Trump	51	34	14	1

d. The news media	49	39	11	1
e. Wealthy political donors	56	38	6	1
f. Liberal activists	40	47	11	2
g. Conservative activists	30	52	16	2
h. Barack Obama	25	38	36	*
i. Average voters	19	55	24	2
j. Social media	49	44	7	1
k. People with extreme political views	56	37	6	1
l. Uncompetitive Congressional elections	35	51	12	3
m. Money in politics	65	31	4	1
n. Political correctness	41	43	15	1
o. Members of Congress	47	47	4	2

12. Do you think each of the following generally do a good job or a bad job making needed compromises across party lines?

Summary table - 10/5/17

	Good job	Bad job	No opinion
a. Democrats in Congress	36	61	2
b. Republicans in Congress	21	77	2
c. Donald Trump	31	68	2

13. Do you think each of the following generally do a good job or a bad job representing the concerns of ordinary citizens?

Summary table - 10/5/17

	Good job	Bad job	No opinion
a. Democrats in Congress	40	59	1
b. Republicans in Congress	22	77	1
c. Donald Trump	31	68	1

14. Would you rate the level of ethics and honesty of politicians as excellent, good, not good or poor?

	----Excellent/Good----			----Not good/Poor----			
	NET	Excellent	Good	NET	Not good	Poor	No opinion
10/5/17	14	1	13	85	49	36	1
2/2/97*	33	2	31	76	39	27	1
1/7/97*	25	2	23	75	45	30	1
12/3/95*	18	2	16	80	45	35	2
4/17/94*	23	1	22	77	45	32	0
3/27/94	25	1	23	74	44	30	1
5/23/89	30	2	28	70	48	22	1
4/19/89	30	1	29	65	37	29	4
6/1/87	39	1	38	61	39	22	1

*ABC News

15. Do you believe that Members of Congress mainly base their policies on a set of core values, or do you believe they mainly do whatever is needed to win re-election?

	Base their polices on a set of core values	Do whatever is needed to win re-election	No opinion
10/5/17	12	87	1

16. Regardless of whom you supported in the 2016 election, do you think Donald Trump's election as president was legitimate, or was he not legitimately elected?

	Legitimate	Not legitimate	No opinion
10/5/17	57	42	1

Compare to:

Do you consider Bush to have been legitimately elected as president, or not?

	Yes	No	No opin.
4/22/01	62	36	2
1/15/01	58	40	2
12/15/00	55	42	3
12/10/00*	71	27	1
12/3/00	73	23	4
11/26/00	76	19	5

*12/10 and previous: "If this ends with Bush winning the presidency, will you consider him ..."

17. Regardless of whom you supported in the 2008 election, do you think Barack Obama's election as president was legitimate, or was he not legitimately elected?

	Legitimate	Not legitimate	No opinion
10/5/17	85	14	1

18. Do you think each of the following generally represent your political views or oppose your political views? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

Summary table - 10/5/17

	-----Represent-----			-----Oppose-----			No op.
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
a. The Democratic Party	56	14	42	43	21	23	1
b. The Republican Party	43	7	37	55	29	26	1
c. Donald Trump	39	16	22	60	15	46	1

19. (AMONG THOSE WHO SAY EACH OPPOSES THEIR VIEWS) Do you think each of the following are undermining America's core principles or wouldn't you go that far?

Summary table - 10/5/17

	Yes, undermining core principles		No, wouldn't go that far		No opinion	
	a. The Democratic Party	66	32	2		
b. The Republican Party	61	38	1			
c. Donald Trump	75	24	1			

NET 18/19

	Represent	NET	-----Oppose-----			
			Yes, undermining core principles	No, wouldn't go that far	No op.	No op.
a. The Democratic Party	56	43	28	14	1	1
b. The Republican Party	43	55	33	21	1	1
c. Donald Trump	39	60	45	14	1	1

20. Do you think each of the following tries more to satisfy voters with (extreme) positions or to satisfy voters with (moderate) positions?

Summary table - 10/5/17

	Tries to satisfy voters with extreme positions	Tries to satisfy voters with moderate positions	No opinion
a. The Democratic Party	44	54	2
b. The Republican Party	52	46	2

Thinking about news organizations...

21. In presenting the news dealing with political and social issues, do you think that news organizations deal fairly with all sides, or do they tend to favor one side?

	Deal fairly with all sides	Tend to favor one side	No opinion
10/5/17	24	75	1
3/27/17*	28	72	*
2/8/16	24	74	3

*March 2017 and prior Pew Research Center

Questions 22-25 held for release.

26. In general, how much, if at all, do you think people who disagree with you on politics respect your views?

	----A lot/some----			----Not too much/Not at all----			No opinion
	NET	A lot	Some	NET	Not too much	Not at all	Depends
10/5/17	48	7	41	41	30	11	10
							1

27. If you know somebody is a Democrat, do you think that only indicates what they think about government policies or does it also represent how they live their lives?

	Indicates views on gov't polices	Represents how they live their lives	No opinion
10/5/17	47	50	3

28. If you know somebody is a Republican, do you think that only indicates what they think about government policies or does it also represent how they live their lives?

	Indicates views on gov't polices	Represents how they live their lives	No opinion
10/5/17	43	54	3

29. Do you think there are (more) things that bind Americans together today than in the past, (fewer) things that bind Americans together, or hasn't this really changed from the past?

	More things bind Americans together	Fewer things bind Americans together	Hasn't changed	No opinion
10/5/17	15	56	29	*

Questions 30-33 held for release.

PARTY ID. Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as (a Democrat), (a Republican), an independent or what?

	Democrat	Republican	Independent	Other	No opinion
10/5/17	34	24	31	10	*

IDEOLOGY. Would you say your views on most political matters are...

	Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative	No opinion
10/5/17	7	17	42	23	10	1

*** END ***

METHODOLOGICAL DETAILS

This poll was jointly sponsored and funded by The Washington Post and the University of Maryland. The web and phone poll is a random sample of adults in the United States, with interviews in English and Spanish.

This questionnaire was administered with the exact questions in the exact order as they appear in this document. Demographic questions are not shown. If a question was asked of a reduced base of the sample, a parenthetical preceding the question identifies the group asked. Phrases surrounded by parentheticals within questions indicate clauses that were randomly rotated for respondents.

Respondents were drawn from a stratified random sample of the AmeriSpeak Panel, the probability-based panel of NORC at the University of Chicago. The sample was stratified by age, race/ethnicity, gender and education. A total of 1,663 interviews were completed, including 1,451 self-administered over the internet and 212 administered by a professional interviewer over landline or cellular phone.

The AmeriSpeak panel was built through a nationally representative probability sample of U.S. households using mail, telephone and face-to-face recruitment methods. Panel members are permitted to complete surveys using an internet device or by phone. Additional technical details about AmeriSpeak survey methodology is available at www.norc.org.

This survey uses statistical weighting procedures to account for features of the AmeriSpeak panel sample design, efforts to recruit initially nonresponding households and to match population demographic benchmarks according to the Census Bureau's Current Population Survey. The Post-U-Md. sample was weighted to adjust for nonresponse, as well as to match population benchmarks for age, gender, education, race/ethnicity and Census Division according to the Current Population Survey, as well as on political ideology (liberal/moderate/conservative identification) to an average of the three most recent Washington Post-ABC News national polls.

All error margins have been adjusted to account for the survey's design effect, which is 1.95 for this survey. The design effect is a factor representing the survey's deviation from a simple random sample, and takes into account decreases in precision due to sample design and weighting procedures. Surveys that do not incorporate a design effect overstate their precision.

Group	Unweighted sample size	Error margin
All adults	1,663	+/- 3.5 points
Democrats	614	5.5
Republicans	359	7
Independents	519	6

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Contact polls@washpost.com for further information about how The Washington Post conducts polls.

